



CITY OF LITHONIA
MINUTES—CITY COUNCIL and WORK SESSION VIRTUAL MEETING
Monday, April 6, 2020 @ 5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

The Council Meeting was called to order at 5:40 pm by Mayor Shameka S. Reynolds. A roll call was taken and the following City Council Members were present: Diane Howard, Darold Honore, Amelia Inman, Vanneriah Wynn, and Ric Dodd. City Attorney Valorri Jones and Zoning Administrator Bill Johnston joined the call as well.

II. Approval of Agenda

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the Agenda; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard, and the approved by a vote of 4-0. Councilman Honore abstained.

III. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

a. March 2, 2020 – City Council Meeting @ 7:00 PM

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the March 2, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

b. March 27, 2020 - Special Called COVID-19 Lithonia Emergency Ordinance Meeting @ 2:00 PM

Councilwoman Inman motioned to approve the March 27, 2020 Special Called COVID-19 Lithonia Emergency Ordinance Meeting Minutes; the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

IV. Public Comments Response for March 2, 2020 City Council Meeting – City Administrator, Lathaydra Sands

The Sign Permit (wall mural) for 7268 Center Street will be referenced by the Zoning Administrator under the Agenda section of Other Business.

V. Public Comments (Limit 2 minutes per person)

Ms. Allene S. Harper (6992 Braswell Street) stated the home next door to her at 6984 Braswell Street is unkempt and a sore eye, both persons who lived there are since deceased, contact information on the real estate signage is North Atlanta Keller Williams (770) 663-7291 and Philip A. Butler (404) 704-2375. The other concern is a vacant lot at 6978 Braswell Street; it is a duplex where the grass is grossly overgrown. Mayor Reynolds indicated the concern would be referred to Code Enforcement.

Ms. Laura Morales (6978 Braswell Street) stated that a home near her has trees that are falling in the yard, the roof is caving, and windows are broken. She did not have the address and was provided with the city clerk's email address to forward the information for follow up.

Mr. John Ehrmann (2615 Reagin Street) regarding 2602 Reagin Street, he is against any approval for a play area.

Ms. Teresa Minge (2610 Reagin Street) regarding 2602 Reagin Street, she is against the playground area and it may affect her property value.

Mr. Jeffrey Powell (Applicant for Alcohol License for Situations Lounge) with request to wave the \$300.00 rezoning fee. Informed this can be addressed during his presentation.

Mr. Ricky Lee (Lithonia Business Owner) asked if he were still under quarantine. Yes, at this time until April 13.

Ms. Sharon Inman (2640 Johnson Street) stated a “thumbs up” to public works for doing an outstanding job on cutting the grass at several abandoned homes on Johnson Street, the grass at times is 4-5’ high, she has been maintaining one of the yards as well. Concerned that the city should receive compensation from the owner of these properties; 2637 Johnson Street, 2644 Johnson Street, and one other but the address is not identifiable. Mayor Reynolds will speak with the Public Works department and determine who owns the property to enforce action.

VI. Presentation (Limit 8 minutes per person)

a. Alcohol License – Mr. Frank Redding “Situations Restaurant & Lounge” 6926 Main Street

Mr. Frank Redding and Jeffrey Powell provided presentation and asked if the rezoning fee could be waived given the loss of time and revenue which has delayed their opening. Mayor Reynolds requested that Council discuss for approval during the Virtual Work Session Meeting on April 20, 2020.

b. Lithonia Park Reservation

“Cricket Games” Ms. Mavis Johnson

(4/5, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3, 5/17, 5/31, 6/7, 6/14, 6/21, 6/28, 7/12, 7/19, 7/26, 8/9, 8/16, 8/23, 8/30, 9/13, 9/20)

Ms. Mavis Johnson and Mr. Mark Baker stated that as a non-profit they have utilized the field since 2008 and in-part maintained the landscaping, the games are free to the public, additionally they have participated in donating to the city for the back-to-school events. The league is requesting that fees to rent the park are reduced as they were informed in 2019 there would be an increase in 2020. Given the pandemic the league has a scheduled discussion on April 24 to determine when the season should start. Interim City Clerk Robinette Blount and Amphitheatre Manager Annette Radford will coordinate scheduling to ensure that booking dates do not overlap. Mayor and Council decided not to approve any dates at this time and have requested Ms. Mavis Johnson’s attendance at the Virtual Work Session on April 20, 2020 for further discussion of the fees, as they were not on this agenda.

c. Occasion’s on Main – Ms. Maxine Baptiste

Ms. Maxine Baptiste stated that Ms. Dawn Massey engaged her to manage the Historic Women’s Club as an extension of Occasion’s and it’s usage has been an event center since the beginning of the year, with no plans to annex into the Occasion’s business. Mayor Reynolds asked if Ms. Dawn Massey was on the call for response (she was not), and stated that more information is needed to revisit hopefully during the month of April to ensure that everyone is on the same page.

VII. Action Items

a. Lithonia Park Reservation; Cricket Games – Ms. Mavis Johnson

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the Lithonia Park Reservation for Cricket Games; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn. The motion was then withdrawn by Councilman Dodd and tabled for the April 20, 2020 Virtual Work Session Meeting to discuss/vote on fees.

b. MOU, The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia

Councilman Honore motioned to approve the MOU; the motion was seconded by Councilman Dodd. The motion was then withdrawn by Councilman Honore and tabled to allow City Administrator Lathaydra Sands to follow up with The Board of Regents with questions that Council expressed; expectation of working remotely, supervision accountability, etc.

c. TAN

Councilman Honore motioned to pursue a TAN for the City of Lithonia; the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Howard. The motion was then withdrawn by Councilman Honore and tabled to allow City Administrator Lathaydra Sands and City Accountant Craig Lymburner to provide a loan amount, for further discussion during the April 20, 2020 Virtual Work Session Meeting and May 4, 2020 City Council Meeting.

d. Budget Amendment

The Budget Amendment is tabled for the April 20, 2020 Virtual Work Session Meeting.

e. April 17, 2020 Municipal Court Date

Court Dates are scheduled for May 1st and May 8th.

f. Selection of City Clerk

City Administrator Lathaydra Sands will email a report to Mayor and Council on each candidate background check results.

g. Approval of Chief Association Contract

Councilman Dodd motioned to approve the Chief Association Contract; the motion was seconded by Councilman Honore, and approved by a vote of 5-0.

h. Storm Water Application

City Administrator Lathaydra Sands will look into another application that may include potholes.

VIII. Other Business

a. Zoning Administrator

7268 Center Street – Sign Permit

Bill Johnston stated that the width and area of the sign are in conflict with the ordinance, and the application cannot be approved, a variance is needed. He is suggesting the adoption of a mural ordinance similar to a Los Angeles template that he used to write a mural ordinance for Hapeville Georgia.

2602 Reagin Street – Child Day Care subject to approval of a Special Land Use Permit

Bill Johnston stated that the applicant was issued an occupation tax permit for 2019, and the property had been approved under a 2013 ordinance, that it was not operational for several years prior to 2019. That ordinance was amended for removal from the R-60 District, and no longer subject to approval of a Special Land Use Permit. City Attorney Valorri Jones will work with the City Administrator and Zoning Administrator to determine if the business is legal with the state at this time, for further discussion during the April 20, 2020 Virtual Work Session Meeting.

b. Mayors Report

COVID-19 Lithonia Emergency Ordinance, Kiwanis Club anniversary \$100 sponsorship, Annexation Proposal Update, Department of Community Relations Update, Council Member Districts Update, Bike Trail Update, Georgia Cities Week Update, GMA Convention

COVID-19 Ordinance; Councilmembers were provided a list of residents by their districts and are communicating with residents to keep them updated, emphasizing the stay in place. Once the signed ordinance from the attorney's office is in hand, it will be posted to the city web site.

Kiwanis Club; Council majority are not in favor of the \$100 sponsorship.

Annexation Proposal is on hold, City Administrator Lathaydra Sands to follow up with Board of Regents.

Department of Community Relations is on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councilmember Districts; opportunity to reacquaint with residents, toiletries and food are needed for the COVID-19 distribution project. There were a lot of deliveries made from Thursday-Sunday. Mayor Reynolds is asking for volunteer assistance.

Bike Trail Update; talked to Mr. Kelly at Arabia Mountain and Ms. Calloway at the Housing Authority. The executive board meeting did not take place to allow for discussion of the parking lot. However, Mr. Kelly was under the impression that the city could use Splost funds for the repair.

Georgia Cities Week dates are rescheduled October 4-10. The Blackdot Cultural Festival is scheduled for October 10.

GMA Convention; no updates yet if it will be rescheduled, will know in May.

c. Public Works Update

City Administrator Lathaydra Sands stated that the lights for crosswalks are forthcoming.

City Administrator Update

No news provided on whether there will be a DeKalb Worksource Summer Workers program. Council is suggesting a bidding process if anyone is interested in purchasing city surplus items. Checking on the extension of the deadline for the employee Health & Wellness Grant. N95 Masks are needed for Public Works and Police Department. Will provide an update on the CDBG for Masonic Lodge.

IX. Executive Session (NONE)

X. Adjournment

Councilman Dodd motioned to adjourn the virtual city council and work session meeting, the motioned was seconded by Councilwoman Howard, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.